



Hampton Parks and Recreation Annual Report 2002



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Recreation
Annual Report

2002



The Parks and Recreation Department enhances the quality of life for all citizens by providing a variety of safe and healthy lifelong opportunities in the areas of recreation, education, culture and the environment. The department maintains over 2,000 acres of public parks and school grounds.

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From the Director

The Events of 9-11 have changed our lives forever. The slogan "United We Stand" was quite evident in Hampton during the past year as our Hampton Spirit guided us through difficult times. As our Police and Fire personnel were called to serve, our city showed it's support during this national tragedy. To pay tribute we flew the American flag throughout the city and installed flag banners on light poles in the downtown area. In December we paid tribute to our armed forces with the Holly Days Parade whose theme was "**Spirit of America**". The parade featured our local fire and police personnel carrying the flag that flew at ground zero. A Neighborhood's tree planting ceremony was also held at Gosnold's Hope Park to commemorate the national tragedy. Soil from the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and the plane crash site in Pennsylvania was used to plant the trees.

Adding to these significant events, this past year we also experienced a growth in the use of our public parks and the development of new park activities. Sandy Bottom Nature Park visitation reached a phenomenal high of 546,659 visitors. The new Hampton Soccer Park was dedicated and opened to rave reviews. Buckroe Beach, a major tourist destination through the eighties also experienced new synergy in activities and visitors. The Big Bands and Pomoco Movie Series continues to be big draws in addition to new events such as the Tri-America Triathlon, 1.2 mile Open Swim Competition, and the Beach Safety Awareness Day that attracted over 2,000 spectators.

Our public parks, whether for solitude and reflection, or exciting leisure activities, are here to serve your daily needs.

Hampton - an **All-America City**.

Laurine D. Press



Accomplishments 2002



Bluebird Gap Farm began the first phase of redevelopment that included remodeling the office building, building restoration and repainting, and new signs. Bluebird Gap Farm also experienced a record attendance year with 255,122 visitors.



Hampton Clean City had 2,670 volunteers organize 464 cleanups throughout the year, removing 4,886 bags of litter from public areas of the city and donating 7,883 hours to the effort.



The Special Events Office processed 97 special event applications for citywide events, such as Bay Days, parades, and special events in public parks.



The Hampton's Golf Course saw an increase in play with 56,985 rounds of golf played, the highest amount in four years. The Woodlands Golf Course continues to be a favorite golf course with 57,358 rounds of golf played. Both courses were cited in "Inside Business" magazine as being the top two courses in Hampton Roads for the most rounds played annually.



Buckroe Beach came to life with many new and exciting events that included the Xtreme Sports Camp for teens, the first ever Buckroe Beach Lifeguard Reunion, Beach Safety Awareness Day, Jr. Lifeguard Camp, Women's Invitational Competition, Aquathlon, Hobie Cat Regatta Training, 1.2 Mile Open Water Swim, Tri-America Triathlon Series, Yoga, Kids Fishing Program, Junior Beach Explorers Camp and Paddling Camp. A touch tank, and interpretive signs were also installed along the boardwalk.



Other exciting events produced through the year included Pets in the Park at Gosnold's Hope Park, Santa's Attic at City Hall, Big Bands and the Movie Series at Buckroe Park, the Haunted Forest at Sandy Bottom Nature Park, Downtown Hampton Holly Days Parade, International Children's Festival and Outdoor Recreation Expo at Mill Point Park.

Special Events

International Children's Festival



The second annual International Children's Festival continued to grow with participants and spectators exceeding over 6,000. This year's festival featured 17 countries, up from seven countries the first year. The festival was created to increase cultural diversity awareness among the citizens, especially the youth. The festival featured music, dance, games, arts and crafts, and an information exchange from each country.



Haunted Forest at Sandy Bottom Nature Park

Over 6,000 people dared to travel the spooky trails at the 4th annual Haunted Forest in October. The Friends of Sandy Bottom Nature Park, a non-profit organization formed to generate funds and volunteers to support the park, sponsored this year's Haunted Forest. All proceeds are used to support park maintenance and to provide new programs.

Holly Days Holiday Parade



This year's parade theme was "**Spirit of America**" as we paid tribute to the Armed Forces, Police and Fire personnel who keep our country safe. Over 100 marching units were decorated in Red, White and Blue. The featured attraction was Hampton Police and Fire personnel carrying the American flag that stood at ground zero in New York on September 11th. The U. S. Continental Army Band also made a special appearance.

3rd Annual "Kwanzaa" Celebration

Northampton Community Center was host to over 450 people who celebrated "Kujichauilia" (Self Determination), through African music, dance and storytelling.

Outdoor Recreation Expo

The first ever Outdoor Recreation Expo was held at Mill Point Park in April and was attended by over 1,500 people. The Expo consisted of vendors from area outdoor sporting businesses with highlights of the event being the rock climbing wall, surfing simulator, windsurfing simulator and the Mad Hatters Kayak Race.



Easter Eggstravaganza

Sandy Bottom Nature Park hosted the annual festival in March. Over 320 children participated in Easter egg hunts, children's crafts and face painting.

Storytelling in the Park

On six Fridays during the months of June and July, Mill Point Park came alive through animation, magic, and puppets as performers thrilled and excited over 3,000 children.

New Facilities

Hampton Soccer Park

Youth soccer is the fastest growing sport in Hampton and because of its growing interest, a new soccer park was opened at the corner of Andrews Boulevard and Old Buckroe Road. The new park features two regulation size soccer fields, bleachers, underground irrigation system and a parking lot. Eventually the park will have four lighted soccer fields, restrooms, concession building, and a walking trail.



Gosnold's Hope Park Operations Office

In 1966 the operations staff of the Parks Division moved to Gosnold's Hope Park and into an existing building that was converted into an office. Over the years the building had become deteriorated to the point that it was no longer safe for employees. In 2002, 36 years later, the operations staff moved into new modular offices. The new offices have greatly approved the appearance of the park and increased employee morale.



The Old



The New

Buckroe Beach Lifeguard Comfort Station



During the heyday of the Buckroe Beach Amusement Park, the lifeguard station and restroom building located on Tappan Mall was almost a landmark for beach patrons. The concrete building with turnstile entrance also provided first aid, information, and the first place to look for a lost child. In FY02, the building was razed and a new building was constructed to house the lifeguards during the beach season. It also provides restrooms for beach patrons and a much needed storage area.

Hampton History Museum

The Hampton History Museum is scheduled to open in early spring 2003. This facility will be a major tourist attraction and will house Hampton's collection of 400,000 artifacts. The facility will have permanent and revolving exhibit displays on Hampton's unique history.



Buckroe Beach.....

POMOCO Movie Series

Buckroe Park is the place to be every Tuesday night during the summer. This year the park came to life as over 1,000 spectators came out each night to view the movie on the big screen. Pre-movie activities included contests, dancing, food and amusement rides.



Tri-America Triathlon Series

Buckroe Beach hosted a leg on this years nationwide triathlon series. Over 500 participants competed in the swim, bicycle road race and marathon run to compete for points towards national championship.



Annual 1.2 Open Swim - **69 swimmers participated**

Buckroe Beach Lifeguard Competition - **In June the 3rd Annual Lifeguard Competition was held at Buckroe Beach. over 100 guards participated from Oceanview, Sandbridge, Virginia Beach, Ft. Eustis, and Huntington Beach. The Buckroe Beach Patrol came in third.**

Junior Lifeguard Camp - **In July the first Junior Lifeguard Camp was held at Buckroe Beach and 12 campers attended. Campers learned the basics of open water rescue, CPR, first aid, and shadowed lifeguards during their daily routines.**

.....A Revitalized Treasure

POMOCO Big Band Series



Buckroe Park offered the sounds of big bands and swing every Sunday evening during the summer. Just as the sun was setting, the park came to life with music to make you dance. The free outdoor concerts attracted crowds of over 700 each night.

Safety Awareness Day

Approximately 2000 patrons attended the 2nd Annual beach safety awareness day in June that included exhibits on beach and water safety, ident-a-kid, arts and crafts and exciting games.



Summer attendance at Buckroe was 225,000 patrons

Xtream Team - This new program provided young adults aged 12-18 opportunities in kayaking, canoeing, hang gliding, surfing, rock climbing, white water rafting, caving and windsurfing.

The beach experience was enhanced through self guided tours made possible by 12 interpretive signs along the boardwalk. Signs inform the public about the history of Buckroe Beach, ecology and the Chesapeake Bay.

Teens

Kraft Neighborhood Park Teen Night was held from January through June and was designed to provide teens a safe place to participate in recreation, basketball, card games and social interaction.

In February the National Girl Scouts organization and Parks and Recreation partnered to sponsor “**Girl Scout Thinking Day Celebration**” at the Northampton Community Center. Over 335 Girl Scouts from all over the Peninsula participated in a day of sharing information and group interaction.

National Recording Artist “**The Delfonics**” visited the teen recording studio at North Phoebus Community Center in June to help celebrate the opening of the recording studio. The newly created studio was designed to give teens an opportunity to learn more about the music recording industry, the theory of music, and making their very own music cd's.



Northampton Community Center partnered with Alternatives Inc. to sponsor the **District 1 Block Party** in May that was attended by 1,000 children, parents, teens, and grandparents. The fun-filled day included face painting, balloon sculpting, amusement rides, entertainment and demonstrations by Jazzercise, Tae Kwon Do, and the Y. H. Thomas Total Domination Dance Troupe. A teen summit was also held that day with 90 teens participating in an open forum on “**School Violence and Your Community**” hosted by the Unity Commission.

Two teen camps “**Club 11-15**” are located at Lindsay Middle School and Syms Middle School. These clubs for teens ages 11-15 provide the opportunity for social interaction among teens and their peers.

In April a “**Teen Job Fair**” was held at Northampton Community Center. Busch Gardens, Wal-Mart, Kentucky Fried Chicken and all military branches provided employment information to teens looking for summer employment.

Sentara Hospital sponsored the **Hampton Roads Regional Girls Basketball League**. For the second consecutive year, the Hampton team won the championship and took runner-up at the State Tournament in Goochland, Virginia.



Skate Board Park - Teens assisted in the design of the two proposed Tier 1 skate board parks. Woodland Road Park will be the first site developed.

Summer School Age Programs

Northampton Community Center was the first Community Center to offer a fee-based after school program.

The first ever “**Wee Friends Who Play**” graduation ceremony was held as Anita Johnson and Brennan Russo graduated to Pre-Kindergarten.



Hook-A-Kid on Golf

In August and June the Hamptons Golf Course hosted a golf camp for 80 participants. The camp for beginner and intermediate golfers was designed to teach the fundamentals of golf.

USDA Summer Food Program - During the summer the USDA grant provided funds to provide 37,248 free meals to children in summer programs.

School Age Programs - 21 sites were opened to provide recreation, homework assistance, tutoring, enrichment and nutrition. The sites, primarily at elementary schools, had 779 children enrolled in after school and 108 children enrolled in the before school program.

Summer Camps - Summer camps and playgrounds provide children an adventurous summer program that combines recreation and field trips during an enriching summer vacation. During the past year 1,200 children participated in the program.



Youth Athletics - The Athletics Division supports neighborhood athletic associations to sponsor track and field (8-16), soccer (6-16), baseball and T-ball (6-17), girls softball (8-16), cheerleading (6-15), and football (6-15).

Programs for Youth with Special Needs - A Therapeutic After School Program for 6-21 year olds was provided at the Senior Center along with Tae Kwon Do and Teen-Adult programs at Northampton Community Center.

Facility Improvements

The Hamptons Golf Course - Major structural repairs were made to the buildings exterior awning supports. This project included the replacement of the canopies. The exterior of the building was painted and repairs made to the roof. Course improvements included new tee boxes on many holes, drainage improvements and additional trees and shrubs throughout the course.

The Woodlands Golf Course - During the past fiscal year all of the cart paths were repaved with asphalt that have greatly improved the appearance of the course and makes it easier to travel around the course. Landscaping around the course provides seasonal color and on-going projects to improve the appearance of the course.

Mill Point Park - The park received many upgrades during the past year that included the construction of new amphitheater seating. New foundations and seat boards were installed. Electrical service in the park was upgraded and the asphalt paths were repaved.



Eason Park - The roof on the large shelter was deteriorating due to repeated vandalism. A new roof was installed which has greatly improved the appearance and use of the park and shelter.

In October the **Hampton Clean City Commission** volunteers planted 20 Glory Red Maple trees on the Hampton Roads Center Parkway.

Phoebus High School - The girl's softball field was relocated on-site. The new field included field renovation, a new fence and dugouts.

Two football fields at **Hampton High School** and **Kecoughtan High School** underwent major renovations to provide safer playing surfaces. The work included regrading and reseeding the fields.

New playgrounds were constructed at **Langley Elementary School, Aberdeen Elementary School and Y. H. Thomas Neighborhood Park.**



Neighborhoods and Resources

The Northampton Team successfully implemented the Welfare Reform Work to Train Program by receiving volunteers to work. During the past year 24 volunteers have contributed 18,720 hours. Their duties ranged from clerical to park maintenance.

For the second year in a row the city-wide Beautification Program hired teens to complete neighborhood beautification projects at schools, parks, neighborhood signs and other city facilities. This Train to Work Program helps unskilled teens develop invaluable work habits.



The department submitted and received a grant from the National Park Service for \$210,000 to renovate the Hart-McAlister Building located on Shell Road. This site is the new home of the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Hampton Roads.

The Hampton Clean City Commission donated 1,500 flowering bulbs to 25 schools to encourage school beautification projects.

A \$9,000 matching grant was received from the United States Golf Association to support the youth golf programs.

A grant was received from the United States Field Hockey Association to provide hockey sticks, balls, mouth guards, shin guards, and one set of goalkeeper equipment.

The grounds at Sinclair Gardens are now being maintained by Parks and Recreation.

Park Rangers now collect the parking fee at Buckroe Beach from the all day parking lots. During the first season over \$40,000 was collected. Proceeds from the parking lot are used to pay for parking lot attendant salaries and the remainder goes to make improvements to the park.



A new tradition was started in the Downtown Hampton area by installing seasonal decorations on light poles along Settlers Landing Road. Working with Facilities Management, for the first time ever, the tops of public buildings were adorned with white lights adding to the festive spirit of the season.

POMOCO



Family Movie Series at Buckroe Beach June, July and August



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